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PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE

Working paper submitted by the secretariat

Introduction

1. The recommendation to proclaim an international decade of the world's indigenous people was made in paragraph 32 of Part II of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993. The international decade should include action-oriented programmes, to be decided upon in partnership with indigenous people; a voluntary trust fund should be set up and the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system should be considered.

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People to commence on 10 December 1994, the period 1 January to 9 December 1994 to be set aside for planning the Decade in partnership with indigenous people. In the resolution the Assembly decided that, beginning in the first year of the Decade, one day of every year shall be observed as the International Day of Indigenous People, and the Commission on Human Rights was requested to invite the Working Group on Indigenous Populations to identify a suitable date for this purpose. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to appoint the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights as the Coordinator of the

Decade to coordinate the programme of activities in full collaboration and consultation with Governments, competent bodies, the International Labour Organisation and other specialized agencies, and indigenous and non-governmental organizations.

3. The sequence recommended in the General Assembly resolution for consultations among the interested parties is as follows: firstly, the meeting convened to evaluate the International Year is requested to elaborate a detailed plan of action, including an evaluation mechanism, and the establishment of a funding plan for the Decade. Secondly, the meeting is requested to report to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Thirdly, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/26 of 4 March 1994, the Working Group is requested to identify possible programmes, projects and other activities for the Decade and to submit them, through the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-first session in February 1995. In the meantime, the Secretary-General, both in General Assembly resolution 48/163 and in Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/26, is requested to submit a preliminary report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session (1994) and a comprehensive programme of action for the Decade at its fiftieth session (1995).

4. The present secretariat working paper suggests a framework in which projects and programmes may be set. It identifies possible areas of activity for the Coordinator, the United Nations system, regional intergovernmental organizations, Governments, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties such as the media and business. Note may also be taken of the interim report on the International Year of the World's Indigenous People prepared by the Coordinator which contains proposals and suggestions arising from the consultations which took place during the Technical Meeting for the International Year and its reconvened sessions (E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/2). Furthermore, a number of consultations have taken place prior to the Technical Meeting at the initiative of indigenous organizations and Governments. Note may be taken of the Indigenous Peace Initiative of Rigoberta Menchu held in Mexico in May, the indigenous consultation organized by the Maori Congress in New Zealand in June, and the regional meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on the Decade sponsored by the Government of Bolivia. A compilation of the comments and suggestions related to the Decade received from Governments, the United Nations system, and indigenous organizations is contained in documents E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/3, E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/4 and E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/5.

Objectives of the International Decade

5. The goal of the Decade, as stated in General Assembly resolution 48/163, is the "strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health". The meeting may wish to give further consideration to this broad policy recommendation and elaborate upon it. For example, it may be desirable to identify the kinds of problems faced by indigenous people in the areas mentioned, especially with a view to establishing priorities and developing a means of evaluating progress during

the Decade. For example, might it be deemed a realizable goal for the Decade to eliminate disparities in social and economic conditions between indigenous people and the citizens of the society in which they live? If so, how might comparative improvements be measured?

6. The secretariat has held informal consultations with some Governments, counterparts in the United Nations system, and indigenous organizations to consider the desirability of holding thematic years during the International Decade. The response has been generally favourable. It would mean that each year of the Decade would focus on a particular theme such as indigenous children or health. This would not detract from the ongoing programmes to improve the conditions of indigenous people in all areas throughout the Decade but might help focus on an aspect of indigenous society. It might also provide an opportunity for particular United Nations agencies with the appropriate experience to take special initiatives during that year. Thematic years which have been considered by the secretariat include land, women, youth and children, health, self-development, environment, indigenous heritage, communications and the media, culture, treaties, and self-management and self-government.

7. It may also be noted that the Decade is taking place within an ongoing process of international action on indigenous issues. The Decade is part of that process rather than the other way round. For example, it may be anticipated that the draft declaration on indigenous rights will be adopted and that other standards will be prepared; a permanent forum may also be established which will give indigenous people greater international access and influence. Indigenous peoples will participate in and contribute to high-level conferences such as the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, Fourth World Conference on Women and Habitat III. If Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is to be fulfilled, indigenous people will have to play a more active role in environmental and resource management in the coming years. This dynamic process forms the background for the Programme of Activities for the Decade. For this reason, it may be useful to consider how the activities of the Decade can retain sufficient flexibility to complement these developments as they unfold. In the presentation of the Programme of Activities for the Decade it may by useful to identify a short-term (two years), medium-term (five years) and long-term (ten years) programme. As the Secretary-General is requested to submit a first report on the Decade to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, it may be helpful for the meeting to establish a framework for activities of the Decade and to elaborate a short-term programme.

Inauguration of the Decade

8. The General Assembly in its resolution 48/163 decided that the Decade should commence on 10 December 1994, the date designated for the commemoration of Human Rights Day. However, in 1994 it falls on a Saturday when it would not be possible to hold an official event at United Nations Headquarters. The meeting will need to consider whether an official inauguration of the Decade is desirable and what might be the nature of the inauguration. If an inauguration involves expenditure then the financial implications should also be reflected in any proposal.

International Day of Indigenous People

9. Indigenous people are invited by the General Assembly in the above-mentioned resolution to suggest possible dates for an International Day of Indigenous People. This issue is also due to be discussed at the twelfth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

I. ACTIVITIES OF THE COORDINATOR

10. The General Assembly in its resolution 48/163 requested the Secretary-General to appoint the Assistant Secretary-General as Coordinator for the International Decade; it also requested the Coordinator to coordinate the programme of activities in full collaboration with Governments, the United Nations system and indigenous and non-governmental organizations. In this regard, the Coordinator sent a letter to the interested parties informing them of the General Assembly's decision to proclaim an International Decade, encouraging them to attend the Technical Meeting of 20-22 July, and inviting them to hold consultations and to provide him with written suggestions for possible activities for the Decade. The comments and suggestions received are contained in the documents referred to in paragraph 4 of this document. Other communications which the secretariat considers interesting to the meeting will be made available as conference room papers in their original language.

11. The General Assembly, in resolution 48/163, requested the Secretary-General to establish a voluntary fund for the Decade. In this connection, the Coordinator felt it appropriate to wait for the present Technical Meeting before elaborating the conditions and terms of reference of the Fund and appealing to Governments and other interested parties for contributions. Some further reflection on the Fund is contained in section VIII. By the same resolution the Assembly recommended that adequate human and financial resources be made available to the Centre for Human Rights in support of its activities related to indigenous peoples and invited Governments and the United Nations system to consider providing additional resources to finance the attachment of suitable staff, including indigenous staff, to the Centre on a regionally balanced basis.

Indigenous peoples unit

12. In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in interest in indigenous questions, not only from indigenous organizations themselves but also from the public. The International Year further contributed to this surge of international attention. The number of participants at the annual sessions of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the main forum for the discussion of indigenous issues, has also risen rapidly. All interested parties - Governments, United Nations agencies, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations as well as institutions and scholars - have looked to the Centre for Human Rights to take initiatives, provide information, and play an ever-increasing role in promoting the rights and interests of indigenous peoples. Notwithstanding any new activities which may be coordinated from the Centre, it may be noted that the human and financial resources available for this growing mandate to undertake its existing responsibilities are limited. This fact was recognized by both the General Assembly in resolution 48/163 and the Commission on Human Rights which

in resolution 1994/26 recommended the establishment of a unit within the Centre for Human Rights to support its activities related to indigenous people. It is hoped that by the outset of the International Decade these additional resources will become available from the regular budget of the United Nations to work on indigenous matters.

13. In addition to these proposed resources, it may be hoped that Governments and indigenous organizations will contribute by providing appropriately qualified staff to assist with the implementation of the Programme of Activities of the Decade and other work under this mandate. Both the above-mentioned resolutions appeal for such support. In this regard, it may be noted that certain Governments and indigenous organizations have informally expressed interest in assisting in this way. During the International Year, the Centre for Human Rights pioneered a staffing programme with the collaboration and support of certain Governments and indigenous organizations whereby qualified indigenous administrators were seconded to assist with the work. It may be hoped that this highly successful practice can be sustained during the Decade and beyond. Further initiatives for enhancing indigenous involvement in the day-to-day administration of the Decade activities are discussed below.

14. None the less, the experience of the International Year has shown that expectations of what is possible should not be exaggerated. Resources, human and financial, for the United Nations system as a whole and for its manifold and diverse responsibilities in the areas of peace-keeping, emergencies, development, health care, refugee protection and other matters are, regrettably, severely restricted and keenly contested. It may not realistically be expected that substantial funds or personnel will be immediately available for the proposed Programme of Activities of the Decade. For this reason, a realistic programme including important infrastructural elements is proposed as the focus of the Coordinator's activities during the first years. It might be useful, for the same reason, to consider the wider activities of the United Nations system with the same realism and to set a small number of modest but important goals to be achieved each year or during the designated short-term, medium-term and long-term cycles.

Consultation and coordination

15. Consultation is an underlying principle of the International Decade. The importance of consulting and cooperating with indigenous people is recognized in General Assembly resolution 48/163 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/26. The involvement of indigenous people in the day-to-day administration of the Decade's activities will prove to be one means of assuring that their viewpoint is recognized and reflected. It may be expected also that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations will continue to be a vital forum for channelling ideas and suggestions from indigenous people. Furthermore, in the course of the Decade it is likely that a permanent forum will be established which may, if so decided by the Commission on Human Rights, examine on a regular and formal basis the Programme of Activities. Until such a formal arrangement is created, it might be helpful to hold annual technical consultative meetings under the aegis of the Commission on Human Rights to monitor progress during the Decade. In view of the need to present a final report on a comprehensive programme of activities

to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, it may be regarded as indispensable to hold a further technical meeting on the Decade prior to the thirteenth session of the Working Group in 1995.

16. The importance of holding regional consultations is also recognized. In this connection, it may be noted that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has recommended that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations hold sessions in different regions where indigenous peoples live. Although this has not been possible hitherto, the Centre for Human Rights has organized other meetings on indigenous issues in different countries (Greenland, Chile and the Russian Federation) and these have proved extremely useful. It may be helpful to continue this practice during the Decade and consider yearly regional workshops or consultations on issues identified as being of specific interest during the Decade.

17. The range of existing and proposed consultations to be organized by the Centre for Human Rights may be deemed adequate to ensure full and regular contact between the United Nations and indigenous peoples in accordance with the resolutions on the International Decade. In addition to these regular consultations, it is proposed that regular contact be established between the Coordinator of the Decade and the main interested parties. As far as Governments are concerned, the General Assembly has recommended the establishment of national committees or other mechanisms for the Decade. The United Nations agencies are requested to create focal points within their organizations which should serve as a mechanism for further coordination of the United Nations system on this issue. Finally, it would be desirable for indigenous organizations to indicate to the Coordinator a limited number of contact points, on a wide geographical basis, which could receive regular information or be available for consultation, and which would undertake to be in contact with other indigenous organizations and communities in the country or the region. Through such a network, the Coordinator would be better able to communicate matters of interest to the many thousands of indigenous organizations now interested in international developments.

Information

18. A prime objective for the Coordinator in the initial phase of the Decade will be in the areas of information and communication. It was noted during the International Year that a wide range of interested parties, including Governments, intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, universities, the media, schools and private enterprise as well as indigenous communities sought information about each others' activities. In order to respond to these diverse inquiries during the International Year, the Department of Public Information and the Centre for Human Rights have produced a series of information sheets in the official languages and distributed them widely. This experience clearly shows the usefulness of developing appropriately targeted information packs. However, preparing and disseminating information about United Nations activities, indigenous peoples concerns, and other matters of interest requires that an information strategy be elaborated in consultation with indigenous people and other partners. This should identify the purpose of the information policy, the kinds of information which need disseminating, the means, both human and financial, for implementation, and some means of evaluating its effectiveness.

19. It is clear that there is a two-way process involved. Firstly, indigenous people require information about the United Nations system so that they can take advantage of the opportunities that exist; secondly, the United Nations system, if it is to develop its activities in full consultation with indigenous people, need to be able to have more contact with their new partners. Furthermore, the Coordinator will certainly receive an increasing number of inquiries from institutions and individuals wishing to support the work being undertaken with indigenous people. In order to respond to this public goodwill, it will be necessary to develop materials for different audiences such as schools, universities, the press, and business. Finally, an information policy would be advised to make use of the existing indigenous and non-governmental networks.

20. The Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1994/26 recognized the importance of establishing a sound infrastructure within the Centre to take on such a programme when it requested the Secretary-General to make available the necessary resources, including documentation and communication and data-processing needs. It would be useful for the Technical Meeting to provide some guidance on the above-mentioned information programme.

Human rights

21. As the lead agency on human rights matters, the Centre for Human Rights is in a position to incorporate indigenous issues fully into its overall work programme. The Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1993/30 of 5 March 1993 and the General Assembly in its resolution 48/133 of 20 December 1993 specifically requested all thematic rapporteurs, special representatives, independent experts and working groups to pay attention, within the framework of their mandates, to the situation of indigenous people. It may be deemed a priority to inform indigenous peoples on a regular basis about current and future activities organized by the Centre, including the meetings of treaty bodies, visits of special rapporteurs or other relevant action in the field of human rights so that they can provide appropriate information.

22. The Centre may also be in a position to support the objectives of the Decade through its advisory services programme, as was recommended by the World Conference on Human Rights. A specific part of this programme might be dedicated to providing assistance to indigenous people through training courses, fellowships and other kinds of technical support. The Centre, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, has begun a programme to translate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into indigenous languages and it may be possible to develop this activity further. Informal requests have been made by many indigenous organizations to prepare special training manuals for them on human rights and provide expertise from the Centre to keep them informed about relevant procedures and activities. In view of the proposal to proclaim a decade for human rights education, it may be useful to develop specific materials and programmes in consultation with indigenous people.

Research and documentation

23. The General Assembly in resolution 48/133 of 21 December 1993 recognized the need within the United Nations system to aggregate data specific to indigenous people. In the light of this request, it might be useful to examine, in partnership with indigenous organizations, Governments and the relevant United Nations departments and specialized agencies, how such a research project could be developed. It is in the interest of all concerned to have better information about the situation of indigenous people. In particular, the United Nations agencies with responsibilities in the field can better plan and implement programmes if they fully understand and take note of the specific problems of indigenous people. For this reason, the Technical Meeting may wish to suggest guidelines to the Coordinator so that the research requested can be set in motion.

24. In view of the growing interest in indigenous questions, it has become necessary to consider establishing a database, documentation centre and photo and video library on indigenous people. Such a documentation centre is required to assist in the implementation of human rights procedures within the Centre itself; it is also required for the United Nations system as a whole so that the substantive areas may have a reliable source of information. In addition, indigenous organizations and scholars are increasingly interested in undertaking special studies and look to the Centre, as the lead agency on indigenous questions, for assistance. The Decade provides an opportunity to establish a database on indigenous people within the overall programme to create a human rights documentation centre.

Training and technical cooperation

25. In cooperation with the advisory services of the Centre, a number of opportunities exist to provide training and technical assistance to indigenous peoples. The voluntary fund to be established for the Decade could provide support for indigenous initiatives in the field of human rights and might support technical assistance projects requested by them. Such assistance might include funds to help indigenous people with communications, in particular so that they can be linked to any network developed by the United Nations in connection with its information policy (see para. 18). Other areas which might be considered under the rubric of technical assistance include support for infrastructure such as offices, training inside and outside the human rights area, diplomacy skills, and practical technical problems such as those related to land demarcation.

26. It may also be desirable for the Coordinator to establish a special fellowship programme for indigenous people separate from and in addition to that created in the advisory services area. Such a scheme could provide cost-of-living grants to indigenous people for periods of up to six months or more so that they could work with the Coordinator. Such a programme could also be extended to other areas of the United Nations so that indigenous people, particularly from developing countries, have an opportunity to contribute, through their experiences, to the United Nations work and gain first-hand knowledge of the Organization.

Publications

27. The Meeting may wish to consider the idea of developing during the Decade a special series of books on indigenous people. Such a series might reflect the thematic years, if this suggestion is supported, or else select subject matters of possible public interest. Such themes might include land, environment, women, culture, indigenous legal systems and political institutions, development, health and so on. One book could be published each year of the Decade. Note may be taken of the successful series which was developed by the Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) in cooperation with the various United Nations agencies on women.

Meetings

28. It would be useful to consider possible meetings which might take place during the International Decade. Note may be taken of both scheduled and proposed meetings, including those of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, a possible further Technical Meeting on the Decade, and an expert seminar on land and indigenous people. If the General Assembly approves the idea of thematic years, it may be advisable to hold one international meeting on the chosen subject. In order to involve as many indigenous people as possible, it may also be desirable to hold regional preparatory workshops. The meetings, publications and information programme might then focus on the year's theme.

29. A further consideration might also be whether to hold a major conference during the International Decade, perhaps at mid-Decade or at the end of the Decade, in order to evaluate the Programme of Activities or for some other major purpose. If such a conference is considered desirable, it will be necessary to make preparations well in advance in order to ensure success.

Voluntary Fund for the Decade

30. It would be helpful for the Technical Meeting to express its views on the objectives and terms of reference for the Voluntary Fund for the Decade. Note may be taken of the interim report of the Coordinator for the International Year (E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/2) which contains some reflections and information about the Fund established for the Year. Further comments on the Fund may be found in section VIII of the present document.

Partnership projects

31. The Coordinator for the Decade is entrusted with the task of stimulating all interested parties to develop projects in partnership with indigenous people. Such initiatives may be encouraged through the facilitation of meetings and other consultations but, as was initiated during the International Year, it may be considered useful to adopt a more active role. Such a role might include developing projects in partnership with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. In addition, it might be desirable to sponsor certain activities, particularly those developed by indigenous organizations or non-governmental entities. Some reflections about sponsorship of projects by the Coordinator would be useful.

Public relations

32. Some consideration may also be given to public relations activities to be developed by the Coordinator for the Year. It may be useful to consider whether a special logo could be developed for the Decade which would be used by all projects sponsored by the Coordinator. Furthermore, the Technical Meeting may wish to discuss the proposal to recommend to the Secretary-General the appointment of Goodwill Ambassadors for the International Decade who might be drawn from a list of well-known indigenous personalities representing different regions and from diverse fields including the arts, sport or business.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

33. In its resolution 48/163 the General Assembly identified the contribution the United Nations system could make to the Programme of Activities for the Decade. The United Nations agencies were asked to appoint focal points, to consider how best they might contribute to the success of the Decade, and to increase their efforts to take into special account the needs of indigenous people in their budgeting and in their programming. Reports from the United Nations system on possible activities they might carry out during the Decade are contained in document E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/4. The Coordinator was also requested to collaborate and consult with the specialized agencies of the United Nations system concerning the coordination of activities for the Decade.

34. During the International Year, increased contact between indigenous peoples and the United Nations system led to a greater awareness of their concerns. Although efforts were made to address these concerns, more remains to be done. The various bodies and organizations of the United Nations system are better placed to build upon the lessons learned during the Year, and to improve the access of indigenous peoples to their programmes. It was a general view expressed by the agencies that they needed to learn and understand more about indigenous peoples before they could develop adequate programmes of benefit to them.

35. In the consultation held between the United Nations agencies and indigenous peoples following the official opening of the International Year on 11 December 1992 there were a number of suggestions made which are worth recalling. Firstly, indigenous peoples noted that their major problem in relation to intergovernmental agencies was gaining access to them in order to (i) obtain information on their programmes; (ii) provide information on the real situation of indigenous communities; (iii) present proposals and suggestions for activities in favour of indigenous communities; and (iv) contribute to the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes by foreseeing, measuring and describing their impact on indigenous peoples. Secondly, it was indicated that indigenous representatives need to acquire greater knowledge of the possibilities, constraints, policies and procedures of the agencies. Training and capacity-building programmes should be developed to meet this need. Thirdly, there is widespread ignorance of the situation of indigenous peoples throughout the world which the United Nations

system can help to combat. Fourthly, there is a need for indigenous peoples to have access to development funding. The complete report of this meeting is contained in the document E/CN.4/1993/AC.4/TM.3/1.

36. A conclusion that may be drawn from the above-mentioned meeting is that further direct contacts between specific United Nations organizations and indigenous people would bring benefits to both parties. It may be useful to continue to develop consultations at the national and regional levels. The role of the Coordinator may well be to facilitate and encourage links between indigenous communities and peoples and organizations of the United Nations system, in particular on a thematic basis.

37. It may be envisaged, therefore, that under the theme of development the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and certain agencies such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) might work closely to develop mechanisms for the involvement of indigenous peoples in the planning and implementation of projects. Under the theme of education and culture, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) could be expected to play a prominent role; under the theme of environment the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the newly established Commission on Sustainable Development could be expected to contribute their experience. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) might be able to consider how it can involve specialist indigenous childcare organizations into its work and the World Health Organization (WHO) might develop, in consultation with indigenous peoples, possible projects of mutual interest. Other United Nations organizations which may be concerned with indigenous people include the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, the Universal Postal Union, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and the United Nations University (UNU).

38. In the area of self-development, UNDP as well as the intergovernmental development banks such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Latin American and Caribbean Indigenous Development Fund, the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank might consider the possibilities of directing funds to indigenous beneficiaries. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) might specifically consider ways in which its programme can bring assistance to indigenous women.

39. As the governing bodies of the United Nations agencies meet over the next 12 months, it is to be hoped that the necessary authority and budget allocations can be agreed upon to allow indigenous projects and programmes to develop. It is encouraging to note, for example, the adoption by the World Health Assembly at its forty-seventh session in May 1994 of resolution A47.54, in which the Assembly requested WHO to participate in the planning and

implementation of the objectives of the Decade, recommended the establishment of a core advisory group of indigenous representatives with special knowledge of the health needs of their communities, and called for the promotion of respect for and maintenance of indigenous knowledge, traditions and remedies, in particular their pharmacopoeia.

III. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

40. Participants at the Technical Meeting may wish to consider ways in which the regional commissions of the United Nations can promote the objectives of the Decade. It may be recalled that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) played an important role in the organization of the United Nations Technical Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the Environment which took place at the ECLAC office in Santiago in May 1993. Based upon this kind of experience, it may be useful to examine how the regional commissions can assist regional contacts between indigenous peoples and the United Nations agencies and cooperate in the organization of regional workshops on themes of interest. It will be necessary for the Secretary-General in his interim and final reports to the General Assembly on possible activities for the Decade to make recommendations for a programme of action at the regional level.

IV. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

41. In resolution 48/163 the General Assembly invited Governments to establish national committees which would serve as a mechanism for consultation between indigenous people and interested national partners which could include governmental departments, national institutions promoting human rights, non-governmental organizations and other groups, such as universities and schools. It may be hoped that, during the preparatory year for the Decade, some consultations will have taken place. It would be useful to include national programmes and goals in the interim and final reports of the Secretary-General.

V. INDIGENOUS ACTIVITIES

42. As was realized during the International Year, a certain number of activities may be carried out by indigenous people in the course of the Decade. Indeed, the Decade and, if it is so agreed, the thematic years could serve as a framework for the local and community events and projects to be undertaken by indigenous people. The activities that form the specific indigenous contribution to the Decade could be those realized without or with only limited external support. The Coordinator of the International Year included many projects of this kind in the calendar of events; it would be desirable to continue to publicize indigenous events during the Decade. This provides an important record, but also helps indigenous organizations to cross-fertilize and plan more effectively the use of their reduced resources.

43. A hope has also been expressed that indigenous organizations will develop local, national and regional networks which can be linked to the Coordinator's office. In view of the growth of interest of indigenous organizations in

international activities, it would greatly facilitate the task of the indigenous peoples unit serving this expanding mandate if information could be passed through the larger indigenous organizations directly to communities.

44. In order for the Decade to be a success, indigenous peoples will need to identify priorities, organize locally, nationally and regionally to assure contact with the United Nations system, and elaborate suitable projects. Suggestions and comments made by indigenous peoples relating to possible programmes for the Decade are contained in document E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/5.

VI. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

45. In the course of the International Year a number of special activities were carried out by non-governmental organizations. These included the publication of reports and books, special issues of journals and newsletters, the organization of events, seminars, film festivals, and other means of raising public awareness. It may be hoped that the members of the non-governmental community will expand their educational and awareness-raising programmes during the Decade. The programmes of the human rights and environmental movements are of particular importance. Those non-governmental organizations supporting development activities may also wish to consult with indigenous peoples and elaborate programmes for the Decade. It may also be useful for these organizations to inform the Coordinator about their proposed programmes so that he can communicate a list of non-governmental partner organizations supporting indigenous projects and programmes.

VII. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER PARTNERS

46. Several other organizations, institutions or groups may be in a position to contribute to the success of the Decade. These potential partners include the press, independent film-makers, artists, universities, schools, foundations and business. The International Year was supported in numerous imaginative ways: one French school, for example, established an exchange of pupils with indigenous children in Chile; an international school invited its senior students to prepare an issue of their school magazine on the Year; several journalists wrote special feature articles for their papers; a music producer prepared a compact disc of indigenous songs and donated part of the profits to the Year. These kinds of projects may be considered during the Decade.

VIII. FINANCING OF ACTIVITIES DURING THE DECADE

47. The experience of the International Year demonstrated the need for resources to be made available to indigenous peoples for projects. Often, the projects required by indigenous communities are relatively small scale and make use of locally available skills and labour. The Voluntary Fund for the International Year attracted more than 300 projects of this kind and it may be expected that indigenous people will continue to look to the United Nations, and in particular the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade established by the Secretary-General, for support. In this section a number of questions are raised which could be considered by the Technical Meeting.

Voluntary Fund for the International Decade

48. In resolution 48/163 the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to establish a voluntary fund for the Decade and accept contributions from Governments and other entities. An important consideration is determining the purpose of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade. The Voluntary Fund for the International Year received over $500,000 in contributions for projects and more than 40 indigenous projects of up to $15,000 were approved in the areas of development, environment, education, health and human rights. A certain number of projects which could not be supported by the Voluntary Fund were transmitted, following consultations, to other potential funders including Governments, non-governmental organizations and private companies.

49. A first consideration would be to decide whether the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade would continue to support projects in all the areas identified by the General Assembly resclution or whether it should specialize in particular kinds of assistance. It may be noted that if the Voluntary Fund remains open to all projects and substantial funds are raised during the Decade, more formal management, accounting and follow-up procedures, including field missions to hold consultations with indigenous communities, may need to be established. A second consideration would be deciding upon other guidelines for projects. Would projects be accepted from non-indigenous organizations and, if so, on what conditions? Would there be an upper limit for projects? Would projects and programmes to be developed by the Coordinator, including consultancies, information activities, publications and meetings, be funded from the Voluntary Fund? A third consideration would be deciding on how indigenous people might be included in an advisory role, either through participation in a Board of Trustees or in some other less formal and less expensive procedure for consultation. In this regard, it may be desirable to examine the possibility of holding such a consultation at a time when indigenous people are in Geneva.

50. The Technical Meeting will need to make suggestions about the methods for attracting contributions to the Voluntary Fund. In the International Year, the Coordinator made two written appeals and several formal requests in speeches and press conferences for contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the Year. The Centre for Human Rights also maintained informal contacts on this question, through the permanent missions, with Governments known to be interested in supporting indigenous activities. It may be proposed that regular pledging conferences be held in New York or Geneva. However, consideration should be given to those methods which are likely to bring about the greatest level of support. Finally, funds should be sought from non-governmental sources. In this regard, it may be noted that certain contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the International Year came from private sources, including individuals and businesses. However, several offers to raise large contributions through concerts, the donation of art works or other means were unsuccessful. This may be borne in mind during the Decade so as not to raise false expectations when bountiful entrepreneurs proffer their help.

51. It may be useful, in consultation with indigenous people and United Nations agencies with experience in this field, to develop guidelines

indicating immediate and long-term objectives, means of implementation, breakdown of costs, evaluation, follow-up and other matters to assist applicants to prepare well-defined and clearly presented requests. A complementary guide might include a list of sources of funders of projects for the Decade including Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Such a guide might provide practical information about the kinds of projects supported, the financial limits, contact addresses and reporting obligations.

Advisory services

52. It may be recalled that the Centre for Human Rights administers several voluntary funds which may be of interest to indigenous people. The Voluntary Fund for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, and the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights all provide assistance for projects, meetings or other activities within their mandates. The Technical Cooperation Fund may be particularly useful since it provides assistance for training, fellowships, workshops and other activities which promote human rights. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights and the General Assembly in its resolution 48/133 recommended that that Fund should support activities of indigenous people.

Other intergovernmental funds

53. A number of possibilities for funding of indigenous programmes and projects exist in other parts of the United Nations system. For example, both the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme administer small grants schemes which indigenous people can apply for. At the regional level, the Fund for Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union may also be sources of assistance. The International Labour Organisation provides support to indigenous people through its technical assistance programme. Further information about these activities is contained in the section on intergovernmental organizations in the interim report of the Coordinator of the International Year (E/CN.4/1994/AC.4/TM.4/2). The Technical Meeting might consider how existing funds of this kind can be strengthened and whether there is a need for establishing other opportunities for indigenous people.

Governmental funds

54. During the International Year several Governments set aside funds for indigenous people from their bilateral aid programmes. It may be useful to examine the results of these initiatives and propose the extension or enhancing of this source of assistance. Governments may wish to provide details about existing funds available from the development aid programmes and from embassies so that the Coordinator could transmit the information to indigenous people.

Non-governmental and private sector funds

55. Many non-governmental organizations have long-established relations with indigenous organizations and provide assistance for projects. It may be thought useful for the non-governmental community to provide such information to indigenous organizations in the countries in which they work.

56. There has been a growing interest from parts of the private sector in assisting indigenous people. These concerned businesses often consider their ethical and environmental policies as part of the public image of their organization. During the International Year, the Coordinator welcomed support for indigenous peoples from all sectors including business. The Technical Meeting may wish to consider how relationships can be developed between the United Nations and the private sector so that this important source of potential support can be encouraged.

Fund-raising plans

57. No professional fund-raiser was hired during the International Year and all contributions were achieved through the written and oral appeals of the Coordinator and the staff of the Centre for Human Rights. Certain modest entrepreneurial efforts were made only when time could be found. Sometimes they were successful. However, it cannot be expected that a comprehensive fund-raising plan can be developed and implemented without a full-time, qualified and proven fund-raiser, and without a budget. Given this extra resource, consideration may then be given to other sources of funding which can occasionally bring substantial contributions. These might include the organization of a special fund-raising concert, the development of some products, such as T-shirts, cards, or diaries, which could be sold for the benefit of the Voluntary Fund, and the arrangement for a sale of works of art. Another possible source of income might be a charge for the use of any United Nations logo or artwork that might be designed for the Decade.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

58. The Technical Meeting is requested by the General Assembly to elaborate a detailed Plan of Action for the Decade including an evaluation mechanism and funding plan. A summary of the recommendations will be submitted to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations to assist the discussions. Any resulting suggestions of the Working Group will be transmitted through the Sub-Commission to the fifty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights. In this respect it would be useful to consider the following questions:

(a) Can the Meeting identify the main actors who will be involved in contributing to the success of the Decade? Is the framework identified in the present document sufficient?

(b) What organizational arrangements should be established in the next six months? Should lists of national committees, United Nations focal points and indigenous partners for the Decade be established?

(c) What should be the Coordinator's immediate priorities?

(d) What are the guidelines for the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade? What are the immediate proposals for raising funds?

(e) Are there any specific projects which can be started immediately?

(f) What is the proposed programme for 1995?

(g) What is to happen at the inauguration?

(h) What is the recommendation regarding thematic years?

(i) What should be the priorities of the information programme?